

LE BULLETIN

Institut Simone de Beauvoir Institute

NEWSLETTER

Fall/Winter 1983
Université Concordia/
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec

STUDENT EDITORIAL

NEW DIRECTIONS - PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

by Pamela Burke

A visitor to Canada from another country was once heard to comment, with incredulity, upon the apathetic lack of involvement in national politics shown by the majority of Canadian citizens. "In my country," she said, "no one can afford to be disinterested. Our politics are central to our very lives."

As women who call ourselves feminists, we, too, must come to realize the necessity of activism to the furthering of the causes we hold dear. As long as our politics remain purely theoretical, we change nothing, and in fact do ourselves harm by appearing to be less committed than we actually are.

It is doubtful that any two feminists have ever adopted the exact same set of beliefs; history, in fact, has shown quite the opposite to be true. Yet history also attests to the fact that individual feminists, willing to lay aside minor, and even major, points of contention, have been able to work together for changes benefitting all women: witness the suffrage movement, the early birth control movement and the movement advocating equal pay for women doing the same work as men, to name only a few of the causes towards which feminists have, in the past, directed their combined energies.

Women in a North American university milieu, we find ourselves to be some of the most privileged people of all time. Yet this desirable position all too often acts as a pacifier to our sense of injustice, dulling our comprehension of the immediacy with which we must act upon our beliefs if we do, indeed, wish to effect social change.

Practical experience is the only way to test and refine our political convictions. The time is more than ripe. Take a stand. Women unite!

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PROFILE: ELIZABETH SACCA

by Patricia Morley, co-editor

The Institute's new principal first felt the urge to teach at the age of nine, when she and her eight-year-old sister organized a morning kindegaarten. For a dime per kid, they educated the neighbour children through games, songs, and coloured cut-outs. Their astonished mother insisted that the fee be reduced from a dime to a nickel. Dedication flourished as the profit margin sank.

Elizabeth Sacca was born in Philadelphia and returned there, after years in Cuba and Virginia, for high school and university (B.Sc., Pennsylvania State University, 1965). Memories from undergraduate days include discouraging experiences in math and philosophy. Elizabeth was the only woman in the math course; with an unfriendly, vaguely hostile instructor, she got one of her rare Cs and dropped the course after one term. In philosophy she was confronted by an instructor who could not believe that she had written her own essay: it was too good for a woman. She found this "a very traumatic experience. I was really burned there." Undergraduate years included a very brief marriage ("I was a kid") to a man who expected her to stay home and raise children; longing for further schooling and challenge, Elizabeth felt trapped and the relationship ended.

Meanwhile, her interest in drawing and painting led her to art and art education. She had at this time no interest in women artists ("I never heard of any!") but felt at ease in her own work. She was one of three women doctoral students among forty students during her doctoral studies: "Those were exciting years." Elizabeth enjoyed the challenge, the research, the intellectual arguments.

The atmosphere changed when she moved to Indiana to her first teaching job as director of a relatively new doctoral programme in art and art education. In the mid-West, Elizabeth experienced an "incredible" amount of discrimination against women. This was the geographical area chosen, in the "Middletown" sociological study, as the typical American town. The students in the doctoral programme were all men and were all older than herself. "I was a single woman," Elizabeth recalls, "in a town that didn't believe in women being single." A female colleague was fired for being pregnant. Fifteen years later, the atmosphere in Indiana still evokes anger and strong emotions.

Elizabeth cut her political teeth in the American mid-West without quite realizing it, at the time. Indiana taught her that being a woman was a political statement. As a teacher, she gradually became aware of the System's pressures against women and non-conformists. She was both. She sensed that refusals of sexual overtures closed doors to political advancement ("to advancement? to survival!"). The conservative expectations of America's mid-West included traditional roles for women as housewives and mothers. Conservative and dogmatic attitudes in the art Establishment

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meant that abstract impressionism was In, flowers and landscapes and portraits were Out. These taboos, this rigidity, was unacceptable to Elizabeth. But the System expected women to conform more, not less. One colleague complained of the length of her skirts; another, near retirement, told her "A single woman is treated like a strange animal, a third sex." Very gradually, the non-conformist was becoming a feminist.

After two years of pressures subtle and blatant, Elizabeth left this stifling atmosphere to teach Art Education at the Philadelphia College of Art. She was the only one in the department with a doctorate, and served for three of her four years there as departmental head. Most of the faculty were practicing artists; Elizabeth did drawing and silk screen. She changed the entire undergraduate curriculum in art, thereby attracting better qualified students.

In 1975, a new doctoral programme in Art Education at the newly merged Concordia University offered Elizabeth the prospect of a research-oriented job. Liking Montréal, she jumped at the chance. Since coming, she has completed Visual Arts Reference and Research Guide, a major reference work with Loren Singer: an annotated bibliography, by topic, in the visual arts. Elizabeth hopes to see feminist research flourish at the Institute during her tenure as principal.

And so the nine-year-old teacher became a painter, a professor, a non-conformist, a researcher, and a feminist: Elizabeth Sacca.

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REPORT ON THE NAC CONFERENCE - MARCH 25-28, 1983

by Robin Ward

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) is a national, voluntary, non-Governmental, feminist, umbrella organization, its membership consisting of more than 230 groups which support its objectives. It works to improve the position of women in Canada through preparing briefs to present to Government, through lobbying Members of Parliament, and through enhancing media coverage of women's issues. Its annual conference of 1983 was held March 25-28 in Ottawa. Lynne Beaudoin, Jo Vellacott, and Robin Ward attended as the delegates from the Simone de Beauvoir Institute.

Highlights of the weekend included (1) the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commissioner Shelagh Day's talk on the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms and its implications for women, (2) workshops on various topics related to women, (3) the discussion over the move of the head office, and (4) lobbying Members of Parliament on Monday, March 28.

Shelagh Day's keynote address touched on two major points. She pointed out firstly that women's status in terms of the law operates on more than one level. As women, we may be unequal in the face of the law, in the wording of the law itself; we may be equal in the wording of the law but not in the administration and application of the law; we may be unequal in terms of the coverage or reach of the law; we may be unequal in terms of the results that flow from the law. She elaborated on the subtle differences between these four conditions in her talk. She, secondly, urged women to take the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as their own, to organize, to go over the legislation and to lobby and recommend what changes we want. The Government has allowed a three-year period - until April 17, 1985 - to bring existing legislation into line in terms of sexual equality (i.e. until sexual equality will be legally in effect). Day stressed that women's input into that process is essential. The first of the four legal inequalities listed above will be the easiest to change, she argued; the last three will take more work but women must take them on nevertheless in order that real legal equality between women and men, on all levels, will be ensured.

Workshops offered at the conference were: Social Services and Federal/Provincial Funding, Native Women, Justice (Pornography and Prostitution), Survival, Health, Employment, and Allowances and Tax Benefits for Spouses and Children. The Employment workshop, which I attended, dealt with the many ways in which women, particularly, are suffering during the present economic slump. To mention only a few: part-time workers' rights are decreasing; social services are being cut (an area in which women work and whose services women use); the right to strike has been cut back in some work places - a tool by which women have been making gains in the last few

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REPORT ON NAC cont...

years; the Federal Government is dawdling on U.I.C. maternity amendments, put off since 1978; there has been an erosion of equal pay provisions - in the 70s wage controls which hampered female/male wage parity were exempted from wage control legislation - this is not true now. It was suggested that, in an effort to improve the economy but not hamper employment, the Government could impose price controls but not wage controls, and that they could reduce military expenditures and put that money in to employment and re-training programs. The "hot" issue these days of microtechnology and its effect on women's employment was also dealt with at great length.

One of the most emotional events at the conference was the discussion about whether NAC's head office should be moved to Ottawa from Toronto. Arguments for the move were that: (1) since NAC is a lobby group, it would make sense to be near Parliament, (2) it would mean easier access to information about what is going on in Ottawa, and (3) it would be less alienating for franco-phone feminist groups from Québec, many of whom have now dropped out because of the anglo emphasis in NAC, in Toronto specifically. The major argument against the move was that many of the member groups are in Toronto and thus keeping the head office in Toronto would mean continuing the grassroots flavour of NAC - moving the office to Ottawa would give NAC a pro-Government, out-of-touch-with-the-people flavour. After much heated discussion, the vote was taken. It was a tie, and since according to the NAC constitution a tie is considered to be a loss, the head office remains in Toronto for now.

I enjoyed the conference immensely. I was **struck** by the diversity of the membership and also by its - the pro-Toronto contingent was right! - grassroots nature. Representatives were there from trade unions, from transition houses, from rape crisiscenters, from YWCAs - women who work daily with women in the community. I was moved by their energy and by their commitment, and I appreciated the break from the theoretical emphasis of academia. Unfortunately the pro-Ottawa contingent was also right - one of my disappointments with respect to the conference was that it was far from bilingual and it is understandable that French groups would feel alienated in such a solidly English environment.

Thank you very much, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, for extending to me the invitation to attend this conference. I value the experience.

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FEMME MILITANTE À LA CONDITION FÉMININE DANS LES SYNDICATS

par Louise Lafortune (étudiante en études de la femme et militante à la condition féminine de la Fédération nationale des enseignants et enseignantes du Québec - FNEEQ-CSN)

Je veux partager les malaises que je vis comme femme militante à la condition féminine dans les syndicats. Je trouve très difficile de rallier féminisme et syndicalisme.

Y a-t-il une place pour les femmes dans les syndicats tels qu'ils fonctionnent actuellement?

Les structures syndicales actuelles ont un fonctionnement que je qualifie de "mâle". Par l'expression "mâle", je fais référence à l'homme socialisé, c'est-à-dire formé par les influences de la famille, de l'école et de l'organisation sociale. Dans sa forme, l'organisation syndicale reproduit l'exercice de pouvoir tel que je le vis dans la société en général.

Si dans ma vie de tous les jours, je conteste ce pouvoir qu'exerce l'homme par les privilèges que la société lui attribue, je ne vois pas pourquoi je supporterais cette emprise "mâle" dans les syndicats.

Je ne sens pas que les syndicats qui se disent une organisation de défense des intérêts des travailleurs et travailleuses défendent au même titre les hommes et les femmes.

Depuis quelques temps, je remets en question le fonctionnement syndical actuel. Je suis de plus en plus convaincue que les femmes ne pourront y avoir leur place sans un changement profond.

Les femmes peuvent-elles exiger des transformations de la structure syndicale tout en y militant activement?

Peut-on, nous les femmes, jouer le jeu, car cela en est un, tout en demeurant nous-mêmes et en sortir gagnante?

Plus je regard ce qui se passe, je ne crois pas vraiment possible d'éviter que les militantes et militants s'oublient pour devenir autres qu'elles ou eux-mêmes en s'intégrant dans les structures syndicales. Ces structures sont tellement rigides qu'elles ne laissent aucune place aux émotions, à la remise en question, elles ne font que nous façonner pour devenir un peu plus "mâles".

Je cherche présentement les changements à mettre de l'avant. Comme ces bouleversements sont à trouver, il y a des risques à prendre et des expériences à tenter. Je qualifie les structures actuelles de moule rigide. Les changements à apporter vont-ils faire éclater le moule ou le rendre plus souple? Je n'ai pas de réponse claire, définitive mais je suis convaincue que je ne veux pas du moule actuel.

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FEMINIST PEER COUNSELLING

by Catherine Kellogg

Women's Studies is unlike any other discipline. It is impossible to remain dispassionate about the lack of documented women's history, or sex-roles, or the brutal misogyny of a great deal of "literature". Women's Studies leads to and comes out of self-reflection, and there is often a lot of confusion that accompanies a study of those things that cut so close to the center of ourselves.

I was speaking to a Women's Studies professor last week and she was saying that much of what she does in her office hours is counselling students who are threatened or disturbed about what they are learning. A feminist analysis of the world leads to a profound distrust of its structures, and one of the areas of our lives that has been most mystified, most taken away from us, is the area of mental health care.

One of the ways that we can "reclaim" that area for ourselves is by establishing self-help networks of trained amateurs to do peer counselling. Women have traditionally been seen as good listeners who can easily empathize and provide a sounding board for people to work through their personal problems. We can turn that socialized skill into something empowering for ourselves.

The process of becoming a feminist (an unending and often painful one) includes a whole set of dilemmas that are unique to that process. Ideally, every feminist or every woman confronted with feminist ideas would have a network of supportive friends. This is all too often not the case.

I am interested in organizing a feminist peer-counselling service at Concordia. Anyone who has experience in peer-counselling or might be interested in gaining experience, please contact me at 286-9966.

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I M P O R T A N T R E M I N D E R ! ! !

The Institute is planning a weekend at Lacolle - Nov. 4-6, 1983. More details will follow.

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FEMME D'ICI À DECOUVRIR: MEDJE VEZINA

par Lucie Lequin

TENDRESSES DECLOSES

MON AME, c'est fini d'étouffer vos tendresses,
D'égrener à vos pas de trop frêles chansons;
Fini de chanceler au chemin qui vous blesse.
J'étais l'épi fragile, et je suis la moisson.
Au rouet du passé j'ai dévidé mes peines,
Mes soupirs n'ont plus peur ni du jour ni des nuits;
Des rayons de plaisir vont couler dans mes veines,
Plus chauds que des oiseaux en boule dans leur nid.
Le silence à mes doigts pesait comme une emphore:
Voici qu'un vin de joie inonde mon coeur nu.
Je suis neuve, je suis une pâque, une aurore,
Je suis un grand délire, et puis je ne sais plus,
Non, je ne sais plus bien les paroles à dire!
Tout recouvre la voix timide de mon coeur.
J'ai si longtemps souffert et je dus tant sourire.
Folle d'orgueil et folle aussi de ma douleur.
Je souffrais! je croyais, mon Dieu, que c'était vivre,
Que c'était là ma part, et je ne tremblais pas.
Sans songer à dresser le cri sourd qui délivre,
J'ai de pleurs arrosé le pain de mon repas.
Qu'importe maintenant, si je ne dois plus taire
Le rêve qui luttait sous ma tempe le soir!
Tous les renoncements qui font hait la terre
Vont crever dans mes mains comme des raisins noirs.
O très cher, je serai ton amante immortelle:
D'impérieux destins ont jumellé nos pas,
Et maintenant, tes mains peuvent comme des ailes
Se poser sur ma chair et délier mes bras.

Medjé Vézina. Chaque heure à son visage. Montréal, Les éditions du Totem, 1934.

Ernestine dite Medjé Vézina naît à Montréal le 16 avril 1896 et meurt en 1981. En 1934, elle publie son unique volume. Elle y dit la sensualité et s'indigne contre la souffrance. Son oeuvre est une ouverture à soi au monde, à la "volupté des choses sur la terre". Pourquoi l'a-t-on oublié? A vous d'y répondre. Son livre est à la bibliothèque Norris.

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MONTREAL WOMEN

by Jo Vellacott

Reading term papers from a class of over forty students can be quite a chore, but my students in last year's introductory course, Images of Women Part II, turned it into an experience more closely resembling the unwrapping of one delightful gift after another.

These were students who had chosen to write an oral history of an older woman. I gave little in the way of guidelines other than to suggest that the writers ask about the changes which had taken place in the lifetime of the women interviewed and their feelings about these changes. Most of them wrote on an older member of the family - mother, aunt, grandmother. Several told me that they were delighted to have this incentive to do something they had long wanted to do.

The result, for me, was a glimpse of the beautiful and moving Montréal mosaic. I learnt about the lives and thinking of a French Hasidic grandmother, of a feminist Black Montréaler, of a nun, of transplanted Nova Scotians and Ontarians, of an Anglican woman minister (not very old by my standards, this one), of three generations of Portuguese women in one family, of another Portuguese grandmother, of a traveler in wartime Burma, of two generations of anglophone Montréalers, of many women from many backgrounds. Humour and hardship abound, and what remains with me most strongly is a sense of resilience, of strength and hope. I feel privileged, and am grateful to the authors and to the women they interviewed for enabling me to share the stuff of other women's lives.

I am especially appreciative to Viki Monkman, who had assigned an oral history in her first-term section of this course (off-campus) and from whom I borrowed the idea.

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SANS COMMENTAIRE.....

Wife-beater is given 500-line punishment

TORONTO (CP) — A Portuguese laborer convicted of assaulting his wife has been ordered by a provincial court judge to write "I will not hit my wife again" 500 times.

Jose Ponte, who can neither read nor write English and needed an interpreter at his trial, was handed a copy of the declaration by Judge Lorenzo Di Cecco, who told him to take it home and copy it by hand 500 times.

Ponte, 32, who appeared in court without a lawyer, is to be sentenced on Nov. 30.

His 22-year-old wife, who has two children and is expecting a third, said the charge was laid after her husband beat her during an argument last May. Someone called police, who noticed Mrs. Ponte had a swollen lip.

(The Gazette 6-10-83)

LES CAHIERS DE LA FEMME ONT 5 ANS!

par Jeanne Maranda

Qui l'eût cru? C'était le 13 novembre 1978 que l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir invitait dans les salons du Faculty Club de l'Université Concordia, les journalistes et médias, au lancement d'une toute nouvelle publication féministe et bilingue par surcroît: Canadian Women Studies/Les Cahiers de la femme.

Shelagh Wilkinson, l'âme conceptrice et dirigeante de la revue était venue spécialement au Collège Communautaire Centennial où elle enseignait, pour fêter avec ses collaboratrices francophones, Mair Verthuy, directrice de l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir et Jeanne Maranda, journaliste-rechercheuse à la télévision.

Cinq ans déjà que Mair et moi avec l'équipe de Toronto, travaillons d'arrache-pied pour fournir une participation en français à la revue ainsi qu'à sa promotion et diffusion. Nos amies, les écrivaines, les professeures et étudiantes du Québec furent sollicitées et ont toujours répondu avec empressement. Mais ce n'est pas assez! Il nous faut dépasser le maigre 20% de français présent, nous visons 50%! Seulement alors pourrons-nous rentabiliser les Cahiers.

Depuis le printemps '83, l'équipe de Toronto s'est adjointe une rédactrice francophone et secondée par Jackie Matte du Conseil des collèges et universités d'Ontario, elle travaille à inviter les franco-ontariennes à nous écrire. Le numéro sur la violence a atteint l'objectif: avec vingt-six collaboratrices nous avons presque la moitié des pages du Cahier en français. Et ce n'est pas fini! Les "Belles-lettres" qui suivent vont continuer sur cette belle lancée et c'est une invitation que je fais ici à toutes les féministes francophones de l'Institut et d'ailleurs. Pourquoi ne pas nous soumettre vos travaux de recherches, vos oeuvres de création? La diversité de nos thèmes ne peut vous laisser indifférentes. Fouillez vos tiroirs, relisez vos devoirs, couchez sur papier vos réflexions. Il nous faut des lettres nouvelles, il nous faut entendre les jeunes féministes.

Nous avons maintenant quinze beaux "Cahiers", quinze thèmes que des femmes ont explorés, sur autant de sujets qui préoccupent les femmes, comme le travail, la santé, l'adolescente, l'argent, les loisirs. Les "Cahiers" ne sont avérés des mines d'information pour les journalistes, les étudiantes en études de la femme, leurs professeures et toutes celles et tous ceux qui s'intéressent à la condition féminine. L'année 1984 vous réserve quatre nouveaux titres: la religion et la femme; la pop culture; la femme âgée, l'utopie.

Dans notre bureau à l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir, nous avons quelques anciens numéros à vendre. N'hésitez pas à venir nous voir. Doris Brassat,

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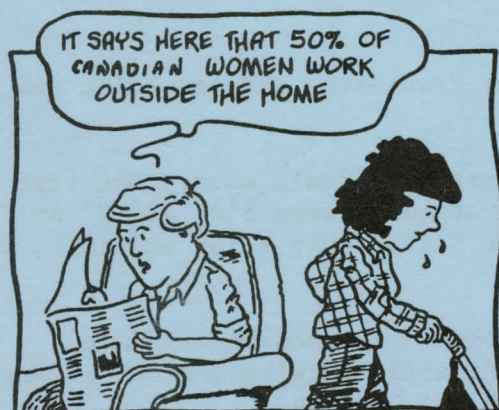
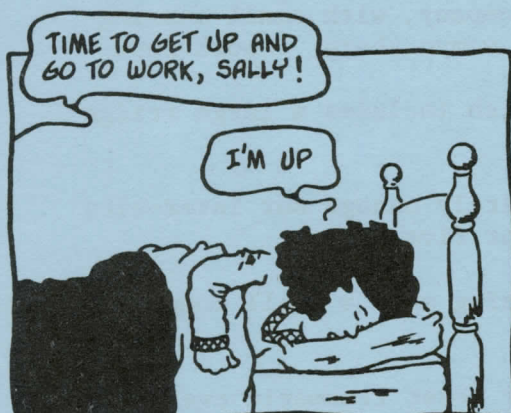
LES CAHIERS cont..

diplômée en communication est là pour recevoir vos questions, vos articles, vous abonner si vous le désirez.

Le téléphone est 879-8521. Vous pouvez aussi demander à me parler, je serais heureuse de vous accueillir parmi nos collaboratrices.

Les Cahiers sont pour vous, pourquoi pas par vous?

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ADD THAT TO THE 100% WHO WORK **INSIDE** THE HOME, AND YOU'LL FIND THAT WOMEN DO 150% OF THE WORK!



WOMEN MOVERS: DON'T MOVE WITHOUT THEM

by Elsa Schieder.

Men hold most of the well-paying jobs. We're all aware of that.

Women should hire women doctors, lawyers, dentists whenever possible. We've heard that advice, most likely.

But how many of us would think of using women movers?

My covivant was recently transferred from Montreal to Toronto, with his company picking up the tab (about \$5000) for the move.

"\$5,000. Who's going to get that money?" I didn't mean: Allied Van Lines or King's Transfer!

Richard was easy about hiring women--provided I could find women movers.

The Morgan the Mover advertisement ("by womyn for womyn") in Broadside, a Toronto feminist newspaper, made my task a snap.

Morgan the Mover turned out to be a small company, with small meaning one phone, Karen Morgan, and whatever other womyn there work for.

I mentioned our collection of appliances which includes a large fridge and a huge antique armoire.

"No problem," said Karen. They could definitely manage our inter-city move. Further, she'd been handling moves for five years.

Both Richard and I had reservations about using such a small company. Still how could it grow unless people used it?

So we did--and the move turned out to be our least traumatic ever. For example, on our last move, the armoire was bashed against a wall. This time, it was taken down stairs and then up narrow Victorian stairs the best possible way--uneventfully.

But what were the movers--Karen, B.J., Susan, Francesca, Janice, Ellen and Amanda--actually like?

In size. They were smaller than the men movers I've dealt with. Not that the men have been uniformly large: they've varied between 5'4" and 6' or so. But the women's average height was about 5'4". Only Ellen was tall, about 5'10".

In numbers. There were, definitely, more women. The men movers have usually worked in crews of three, with two primarily lugging and one primarily supervising. The decision to use seven women was Karen's.

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WOMEN MOVERS cont...

As packers and luggers. Most of the women did some packing; only one small piece of glass was broken. Four women lugged the heavy objects, with one or two others guiding to make sure nothing was damaged. (Who did what varied.)

In outside interests. The women had a variety of interests: journalism, music, literature. One, forty-year-old Janice, was a teacher just back from four years up North. Only Karen was a full-time mover. And even she's very involved with the Toronto feminist community.

Were there any drawbacks to working with these women? Karen had a bad cold, which spread. Amanda was in a bad mood. Also, due to the numbers involved, there was occasionally a lack of organization.

All told, the benefits far outweighed the imperfections.

Two final points.

Money. Each crew member, including Karen, was paid an equal amount.

Visibility. Seven women parking huge trucks and tramping in and out of a home carrying boxes and furniture attract quite a bit of attention. So, you can't use women movers if you want to be inconspicuous. On the other hand, using them is a great way to get to see most of your neighbours.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

23, 24 January 1984 - A public lecture and seminar/workshop given by Mary O'Brien, Toronto author of Politics of Reproduction. Watch for further details

To begin in November, organized by the Co-Curricular Committee:

- A series of open discussions on topics of concern to students of the Institute. Suggestions have included the peace movement, abortion, lesbianism and women's health.

The Co-Curricular Committee of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute is the body responsible for the organization of the Institute's para-academic events. Student involvement is actively sought, as the pertinence and relevance of all extra-curricular programmes to the student milieu is of primary concern. Please feel free to call Pamela Burke at 879-8405 or 484-9966 for more information.

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I M P O R T A N T ! ! !

New to the Simone de Beauvoir Institute this year is liaison person Pamela Burke, whose part-time job was created in response to the Institute's need to make itself more visible, both within the University and in the community at large. Her role is essentially one of public relations, setting a procedure for the distribution of information, on campus, and to other Montreal-area organizations, about the Simone de Beauvoir Institute's various events, activities and programmes.

To this end, Pamela is working to compile a mailing list of feminist groups in and around the city. If you are affiliated with, or know of, any organization which would benefit from inclusion on the list, simply leave a note in Pamela's box at 2170 Bishop Street, or phone her at 879-8405 or 484-9966.

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CONCORDIA WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE

by Catherine Kellogg

Since 1979 there has been no student women's organization on campus. This year the Concordia Women's Collective has come into existence, and it is filling a unique and important need for female students.

The Collective meets weekly and generally we have an hour of business, followed by an hour of informal discussion. There are approximately 65 women who have attended Collective meetings so we have obviously tapped into a need and some energy on campus. We come from many different personal and political perspectives and there seems to be a genuine respect and tolerance for a variety of levels of interest and commitment.

The Women's Collective took an active role in the organization of Disarmament Week, and we are planning a series of events around National Prisoner's Week (which will include a screening of P4W and discussions led by prisoner's rights activists). We are organizing a series of Body Image Workshops as well as a series of discussions on the portrayal of women in literature. A "Bluestockings" group has been formed for women who want to ~~do~~ some in-depth study of feminist theory and methodology.

All female undergraduates are ipso facto members of the Women's Collective, and anyone (male or female) is welcome to attend our meetings. Watch for notices in The Link and our posters around campus. It's going to be an exciting year.

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NEWS ITEM!!!

In 1983-84, the Advanced Seminar in Women's Studies (491/2, 492/4) has several unusual features. This year's topic, Canadian Women's Writing, is being conducted by co-instructors Patricia Morley and Lucie Lequin, both of whom are present at every seminar; and is carried on in both English and French. A reading knowledge of English is essential, as a few of the texts have not yet been translated into French. New students may register for the second half (492/4), which begins in January 1984.

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NEWS ITEM cont...

Qu'est-ce que les auteures francophones et anglophones de chez-nous ont-elles en commun? Ecritures parallèles ou écritures entre mêlées? Quelle est la cognation entre les visions féminilières de ces femmes si diverses? L'origine linguistique de la lectrice influence-t-elle la lecture? C'est ce questionnement qui sous-tend le cours WMNS 491/2, 492/4 où les professeures et les étudiantes (le nombre fait la force, aussi le féminin l'emporte sur le masculin) essaient de provoquer les retrouvailles des auteures d'ici, sans frontière de langues. Ce cours est d'autant plus inusité que l'on tente d'y pratiquer le bilinguisme. Certes, il faut ralentir le débit, traduire, résumer et parfois écouter la langue des gestes, des intonations. Après quelques tâtonnements, nous tendons vers un équilibre et nous continuerons en janvier avec des auteures aussi différentes que Nicole Brossard et Margaret Laurence, Louky Bersianik et Adèle Wiseman et d'autres.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Nov. 23, 1983 - McGill Women's Union is presenting the film If You Love This Planet at 6:00 p.m. The screening will be in Room 423 of the Student Union Building, 3480 McTavish St., phone 392-8920 for more information.
- Dec. 4-16, 1983 - Communications, Women and Youth, a Symposium and meeting sponsored by the Government of Canada, to be held in Ottawa. The focus is to be on Communications and the role of women in regard to youth. The objective is to learn what comprises our Canadian institutions (governmental, judicial and cultural), how they work and how they interrelate.

Candidates are Canadian women who have indicated an interest in Communications and involvement with young people. Representative of their community, willing to discuss these topics, to gain a better understanding of the Canadian reality and to share their Ottawa experience with their community.

For further information: Communications, Women and Youth, TFCYC
Course No. OS-803, Terry Fox Canadian
Youth Centre, P.O. Box #7279, Ottawa,
Ontario K1L 8E3, Tel. (613)744-1290

WOMEN AGAINST CRIME: Operation Tandem, Another Step Women Can Take

by Julie Woods

At 8:00 p.m. an elderly woman unwittingly interrupts a breaking and entering outside the basement window of her home. The startled thief panics and attacks her, beats her so brutally the assault almost results in murder, strips her of her glasses, watch and purse, and escapes down the dimly-lit street.

A young woman is awakened by a noise outside her bedroom door. Investigating, she surprises a man who, having gained entrance into her fourth-floor apartment via a fire escape, is in the process of burglarizing her home. He attacks and rapes her.

Violent crimes of this nature are becoming more and more frequent in Montreal. Chances are many of us have been or know a victim of crime. Criminals habitually prey on the vulnerable: the elderly, women and children. For this reason, women are engaging in collective efforts such as Take Back the Night marches, self-defence courses, rape crisis centres, and women's shelters. Operation Tandem is another program that can be of significant value to women in their efforts to better protect themselves and others against crime.

A co-operative effort between the City of Montreal, the MUC police, the YMCA, Sun Youth, the BICC, and Le Centre Culturel et Sportif de l'est, Operation Tandem's Neighbourhood Watch program organizes neighbourhoods and trains them in crime prevention methods, especially those directed at reducing the incidence of burglary. Home protection techniques are of great importance as, all too often, a simple burglary can escalate into violent crime. Clearly, both women cited in the examples above could have lessened their chances of becoming victims through the better use of home protection techniques.

Neighbourhood Watch training sessions offer information on how to participate in Operation Identification (the protection of property by engraving valuables with a personal code), how to recognize and report suspicious activity, and how to choose adequate locks for windows and doors. The meeting also provides an opportunity for neighbours to meet one another and to resolve common problems such as poor lighting conditions on streets or in laneways and other areas of mutual concern.

The Neighbourhood Watch program does not advocate physical intervention in criminal activity. That is the job of the police. Nor does it entail patrols of any sort. Simply, it is a means of increasing public awareness street by street, thereby aiding the police in their efforts to apprehend criminals, and hopefully improving the depressingly low solution rate. Many neighbourhoods are using this program with good results, some reducing their crime rate by as much as fifty percent.

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Operation Tandem is free. Co-operation between neighbours and a little time is all that is necessary in order to set up the program.

To start a program on your street, contact the Operation Tandem co-ordinator in your area. S/he will give you further information about the program. Some areas have more extensive programs than others. If there already is a local program, the co-ordinator will tell you how to become a member.

If there is none, and you wish to start one, this may entail your becoming a block captain. The responsibilities of a captain consist mostly in organizing interested residents by distributing pamphlets and giving general information about the program. Most block captains are surprised by the degree of concern and co-operation, as well as by the fact that often there has been more crime in their neighbourhoods than they had thought. The co-ordinator then arranges for an information/training session. The block captain informs the residents of the place and time.

Traditionally, women have been adept at organizing themselves and others. We won the right to vote through our organizational skills. Ask any homemaker about organizational ability. Becoming involved with Operation Tandem by joining an existing program in your area, or by starting one, is another way we can help lessen our chances of becoming victims of crime.

B.I.C.C. (The Bureau d'interventions cliniques et Communautaires) - Cote Saint-Paul and Ville Emard in the southeast, Northwest and central districts and most of the east-end of the city.

Y.M.C.A. - Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Pointe Saint-Charles, Saint-Henri, and the Mile-end district, near Park Avenue.

Sun Youth - The Mile-end area between Van Horne, Hutchison, Mont Royal and St. Denis.

Le Centre culturel et sportif de l'est - This east-end community centre works in conjunction with Jeunesse Optimiste Hochelaga-Maisonneuve.

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PLEASE NOTE

'BACKCARE' classes will commence in January 1984 at the Institute. This is a fitness and fun program which includes stretching, strengthening, flexibility and stress reduction in supportive group setting - 45 minutes of exercise set to music plus suggestions of exercises to do at home and in the office. INSTRUCTOR: Heather Shernofsky. MON. & WED. 12:00 - 13:00. For more information call Heather at or the Institute 879-8521

MES TRAVAILLES LINGUISTIQUES

par Linda Cormier

La langue française souffre, à mon avis, "d'inflation du masculin": on parle, par exemple, des droits de l'homme, du nombre de chômeurs qui augmente, du droit de vote des citoyens (ou électeurs), de la communauté des immigrants, des députés de l'Assemblée nationale, de la mise en disponibilité des enseignants, etc.

Souvent cet emploi excessif du masculin devient risible: à preuve la citation suivante, extraite d'un quotidien montréalais; "Les manifestants, en majorité des femmes,...", alors qu'il eut été si simple (et beaucoup plus logique) d'écrire les manifestant/e/s dès le début, et ce d'autant plus que les femmes étaient en majorité presque absolue, à cette manifestation contre la pornographie.

Mais cette "inflation du masculin" ne touche pas que le discours des adultes: quel "garçon manqué" ne se souvient d'avoir joué aux cow-boys, aux Indiens et aux "bonhommes de guerre"? Ou encore d'avoir joué à prodiger la bénédiction paternelle ou la communion à des ouailles fictives. Bref, tel adulte, tel enfant..ou tel enfant, tel adulte!

Car si les enfants ont leurs contes sexistes, les adultes ont leurs proverbes sexistes! Qu'il me suffise d'en dresser ici une liste bien partielle.

A l'beuvre on connaît l'ouvrier (l'artisan). C'est en forgeant qu'on devient forgeron, charbonnier est maître chez soi, Les grands diseurs ne sont pas les grands faiseurs, L'habit ne fait pas le moine, Il faut rendre à César ce qui appartient à César, et à Dieu ce qui est à Dieu (rien sur Cléopâtre et Marie!). Rira bien qui rira le dernier (la dernière?), UN HOMME AVERTI EN VAUT DEUX (et une femme en vaut combien?), Nul n'est prophète(prophétesse?) en son pays, Comme on connaît les saints on les honore, Les cordonniers sont les plus mals chaussés, Les conseillers ne sont pas les payeurs, Il n'est père que celui que ne veut pas entendre, A père avare enfant prodigue; à femme avare galant escros (admirez le glissement d'enfant à galant, de prodigue à escros...). Le plus belle fille du mondene peut donner que ce qu'elle a ——— signification: nul ne peut donner ce qu'il n'a pas. Notez l'apparition du féminin, et dans quelles circonstances; avec la beauté...Et finalement la perle du patriarcat CE QUE FEMME VEUT, DIEU LE VEUT (il n'a pas dû vouloir souvent...)signifiant que "les femmes en viennent toujours à leurs fins" (Larousse, 1976, p.834) N'est-ce pas magnifique? Ce don que nous avons de toujours parvenir à nos fins...Alléluia!

Voilà un mince éventail de ce que Pierre, Jean, Jacques dit, écrit et lit quotidiennement on ni en sort pas! Le masculin domine², les hommes exercent des métiers (forgeron, charbonnier, cordonniers...)et les femmes sont belles et PUISSANTES! (voir la perle du patriarcat!).

Ah! les mots (maux) de la langue! (essayeront-ils un jour d'être contaminés

MES TRAVAILLES LINGUISTIQUES cont.

par le sexisme? La société ne guérira-t-elle jamais de cette maladie sociale appelée sexisme? Si ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut...

- 1 Le proverbe en lui-même signifie: "un défaut, un vice fait naître autour de soi, par réaction, le vice contraire", Larousse, p. 834
- 2 Egalement dans les proverbes sur les animaux. Ex:

Chat échaudé craint l'eau froide

Les loups ne se mangent pas entre eux.

Les chiens aboient la caravane passe

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LE BULLETIN/NEWSLETTER

Co-editors: Lucie Lequin
Patricia Morley

Production
Editor: Joyce Carson

Abonnement annuel/Annual subscription:

\$ 6.00 Institution
\$ 4.00 Particulière/s / Individuals
\$ 2.50 étudiant/e/s / Students

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1455 boul. de Maisonneuve O.
Montréal, Québec H3G 1M8